Gestures

Angela 2 — Week 3, Day 6, Session 2 — 48 minutes

Summary: Sensing I am here opens the session. Partners then practice the vertical gesture and opening toward another without losing ground or self. One embodies the individual asking for help; the other radiates as the oceanic being. A familiar difficulty is held in that larger presence.

I'm here

Sense yourself here.

Just drop down.

Take a moment and imagine yourself in one of the places in your home where you're sometimes standing, waiting for tea water to boil, or standing in front of your washing machine, or the dishes, or looking out the window someplace.

Just take a moment to imagine this whole body sense. I'm here. I'm on this spot. Live here.

Before or within how am I, I am here.

Here.

This living is occurring.

There's this feeling, that sense, that this living right here is known through this moment of living.

I know myself, or self is somehow sensed.

Just feel a slight movement forward and back. Let your knees soften a bit, your ankles, and a feeling of moving from the center.

Also including the upward dimension.

And the breath, especially down towards the golden ball. Unless it's just more natural to feel it higher, and that's fine too.

Just shifting the weight right and left, and beginning to include space left and right.

And again, a little bit forward and back. Almost like there's a rippling from your body. You know, it's like if we were in water, we could see a rippling from our body through the water. Well, can we kind of imagine what would be true if we could see it — a rippling of the molecules away in each direction?

And then turn a little bit from your center. Let your arms come around, so the sense of being in this whole space, space around you, including the back space. That back space is very, very important for our sense of fullness and safety and presence.

Pause for a moment, and sense the boundary of the physical body.

People like to call the physical body the skin bag. Holding all this water and stuff inside. Not so poetic.

And then sense the interior of your skin bag. And there's space in there, but that sense that there's something in. There's a boundary, and there's that space right around you, this spatial sense of this.

And then we can open attention as far as we can imagine, radiating out, and turning the light around. There's a sensing of the one here from a larger space.

From a larger space.

She's here. He's here. Hello there. Hello there, dear one. My friend.

With a partner

Please find a partner, and organize yourself. If I was partners with someone, I won't be, because we're not — we're an even number now.

They might want to be on pitch. Hello. There we go.

And when you listen to the recording, you don't remember that moment. So, go back a little bit.

So we might line up in the room kind of like this — that's a little too much space. You stay there. Yeah, something like four or five feet.

Then you'll play with it. You'll play and get a little closer sometime, a little further, but begin with something like four to five feet apart. Okay? So you're with a partner.

Where did he go?

Okay. And please have your right foot forward, your left foot back, and begin with your spine long, your neck long, but your gaze is down. You're not looking in each other's eyes.

And coming forward, lifting your arms in the vertical gesture, sensing up, you inhale, and you come back.

Pause here for a moment.

Inhaling, coming forward, feeling movement from the golden ball radiating up, down, and coming back.

Inhaling. And the attention all the way up and down, feeling your center, and back.

Just stand with both feet comfortably, your eyes closed for a moment. Sense your length, the connection down and up.

Sense of the middle.

Feeling of the breath.

Your left foot forward.

Just, with your eyes either closed or downward, you're sensing: I'm here on this spot. And include the presence of the being in front of you. You're not looking. You're just expanding your interest, your space.

You still have this up, this ground, this center. The breath still comes and goes.

And this time, as you go forward, you're going to gaze upward. We'll stay forward a little bit. If you need to breathe, or want to breathe, while we're forward, that's fine. Then I'll tell you when we're coming back.

And go forward. We're inhaling, and coming back, we're exhaling. And you're extending your attention all the way up and down.

Some sense of the presence of the other, but it's more this up and down. Looking up.

Well, you'll see what kind of feeling comes for you when you're looking.

So keep your eyes open. Coming forward, inhaling, up, looking up.

Looking. As you come down, look forward towards the one in front of you. Not right in their eyes right now.

Forward. Extending your reach, high as you can imagine, as deep into the earth.

Connected. Giving and receiving from above and below, and coming back, looking towards the horizon.

Here on this spot, the weight's more on the right foot. Left heel might be lifted. Still have a feeling of ground and sky. Breath moves towards the center.

There's a sense of including the other, even though your dominant presence is in this vertical.

Stand on both.

Ground and sky

Just reflect as you're standing here.

Is it more familiar to you to lose the ground, support — or maybe feel heavy into the ground? Coming away, falling into.

And what about the sense of the length of your spine? Are you more familiar with the sense of kind of pulling down, or lifting?

Reflect for a moment on your connection to the earth and the sky, this vertical dimension. And as you reflect upon yourself, is there one direction more familiar — more, when you kind of get exaggerated in some way?

Stepping forward

Bring your right foot forward. Place your hands on your chest.

What I'm going to do is, I'm going to inhale, going forward — stepping into your life, stepping into your moment, opening your arms.

And part of the experiment right now is, to the degree that you can sense yourself, look towards the face and eyes of the other. When you find you're getting pulled out, please be willing to close your eyes and self-connect. Then you experiment again.

It's not like you're supposed to stay connected to yourself and them the whole time. But as soon as you feel, oh, I'm with them, but I've kind of lost my ground, just close your eyes and reconnect.

I'm going to do this a number of times, so you'll have ample opportunities. And there'll be times here where I'm going to suggest a pause, and then you can just breathe naturally during the pause.

First, we'll do it with an inhale forward and exhale back, without too much of a pause.

Inhaling forward.

Your head — reconnect. You're inside yourself.

When you're stepping into your life, and you're meeting whoever's in your life, which is this person in front of you.

Opening. Inhaling. I'm here. I'm here to the best of my ability to be with you. Look in their eyes.

Come back and let your head come down.

Just pause here a little bit, to really let yourself have your ground, center. I'm here.

And we all know. Now, frequently, it's challenging to involve ourselves and be with another. How not to distort our inner life in order to be with another.

It's such a challenge for us human beings, and we can just acknowledge with humility that that's so, at least some of the time, maybe a lot of the time.

And with courage, we want to step forward. And I'll do my best not to be anything special, but just to be myself in the presence of another.

Coming forward, gazing towards them — eyes towards them, if you can, and have yourself. If not, it's fine to look away.

Breathing here, open. I'm here in my life. I welcome you. I welcome me. Doing my best to feel my ground is here, my height is here, connection to self, and my openness to you are here.

And coming back, lowering the head.

Stepping forward, inhaling. I'm here. Be as authentic as I can be in my moment. I only can know myself in a moment of living. My moment includes you, doing my best.

I'm here on this spot, and I'm with you.

Breathe. Sense your length.

Stand on both feet for a moment. Close your eyes. Just sense what touched you in that. What's challenging, what's fascinating, perhaps confusing.

And then just give yourself time and permission to be right here with yourself on this spot. With yourself, of course, means with the earth and sky and the air. No self separate from all that.

Oceanic space

And your left foot forward. Hands on your chest.

That's connecting to that large presence in you. What's there when you remember — when you're not solely in your historical identity, when you're in touch with that larger space?

Going to be exhaling forward, opening as this oceanic space, connecting with the oceanic space coming towards you. And you get to be dolphins for a moment in that oceanic space.

You're not trying to give them anything or get — you're just opening to this large, fundamentally ecstatic space of being alive, and not having to be anything. Just resting in being.

If that gets uncomfortable, you can close your eyes. If it's comfortable, just let your eyes be open. It's not about you or them. It's this larger space, functioning through you and through them.

So you need some breath, so you can exhale forward, and then we'll stay forward and breathe a little bit, and I'll tell you when to come back.

Exhaling forward.

Inhaling, welcoming anything that they need. Let your head and eyes stay towards the horizon, towards them if that's comfortable.

So, welcoming into the ocean anything that they're ready to let go of. It doesn't come into your body. If it feels like it's going to, send it beyond you.

You are just this vast, open space. Oceanic space.

Exhale, fold.

Breathing. Best wishes towards this one. It's not even yours. It's the best wishes of the whole universe coming through you.

May you know peace. May you know being at home in this great universe.

May you be at peace here.

Any places that don't feel that, let them go into the ocean. Come back, inhaling.

Just breathe here. And let your own wisdom come. It's easier. Keep them open.

Again, gaze toward each other. Soft gaze, soft gaze. Include space around them. The diffuse gaze, not a focus. Just a wide welcoming.

They don't have to be anything. You don't have to be anything.

Some breaths. And exhale forward.

Vast as you can imagine, and it's accepting, and it's unconditional. We all want the same. We all are the same at that level. To be home.

Inhale and touch yourself.

Stand for a moment. Let your arms come down. Your eyes close.

Sense that. That lives for you. That way of being — maybe it's uncomfortable, that's fine. Maybe obscure, maybe familiar, maybe wonderful.

Maybe many things.

One person

People facing the windows, have your left foot forward. People facing the other wall, put your right foot forward.

Place your hands on your chest.

You'll be breathing at the same time. As the left foot forward people are exhaling, they're coming forward, and at the same time the right foot forward people are inhaling. You're going toward each other, and then you're coming back.

I'm sorry, I got that wrong. Excuse me.

You'll be breathing at the same time, the same moment of exhaling. So the left foot forward people are coming forward as they exhale. Right foot people are coming backwards.

To your rhythm here. The way you're breathing is the same, but your movement is opposite. So the right foot forward people are going forward with their inhale. The left foot forward people are going backward with their inhale. One is going forward, one is going back at the same time.

So let's start with the left foot forward people forward, and the right foot forward people backward.

It's getting a little warm.

Okay, so the right foot forward — you're back, your hands are on your chest, and you're going to be inhaling forward.

The left foot forward people are beginning forward, and you are inhaling as you come back.

Right foot forward people will be exhaling, coming back, lowering your head. The left foot forward people are going forward with their exhale.

Okay, actually, let's not include it. Let me show you what I mean.

I have my left foot forward. When he comes forward, I'm inhaling.

If he's coming toward me — one second. Let me just work this, then ask you a question.

As you go back, you're exhaling, and I'm exhaling.

He's bringing his life to me, and I'm welcoming it. Don't worry about the breath either.

And then as he goes back, I'm radiating my unconditional — as he's going into himself. This gesture that he's in right now is: support me, help me, I need help. And I'm coming forward towards him.

And when he comes forward, he's inhaling. I'm going back, and inhaling. He's coming forward with his life. I'm taking whatever he's coming with. I'm welcoming.

He's inhaling, and I'm inhaling. So we're both inhaling at the same time. We're both exhaling. One of us has reversed the pattern we were just doing.

One of you is doing the same pattern, which is to exhale and inhale, and the other is doing the opposite pattern, which is to inhale and exhale.

The left foot forward has been exhale and going forward. The right foot forward has been inhale and going forward.

You got it? Is that it? Can we do that? Let's see how it works.

Go ahead.

Okay. So let's start. The right foot forward starts back. The left foot forward starts forward.

Okay, but you're like this. You're forward, you're open like this. And now the left foot forward is going to go back, and you're going to inhale as the right foot forward goes forward and inhales.

That's it. And then just reverse. All you have to think of is this movement. You're doing the same breath pattern.

As the right foot forward comes back, you lower your head, and actually stay there for a moment. So the right foot forward, your head is lowered. The left foot forward, you're radiating. Your arms are open. You're just breathing there.

Yeah, you're forward, that's right. And just breathe there. Just breathe naturally. I'll guide you through.

Okay, so if you have your right foot forward, your weight is back, your head is lowered, and this has an atmosphere of inner humility, of asking for help and guidance.

The left foot forward has the atmosphere of radiating — of oceanic, caring, unconditional. I'm with you.

Then we're going to inhale. Both people inhale. Left foot forward, go back. Right foot forward, go forward.

Just breathe here.

No — your head is up. You're the ocean. So your eyes are on the horizon.

The person with the right foot is the individual self. Person with the left foot forward, you are your vast being. You are the being of light. Together, you're one person.

You're an individual self, an oceanic being.

Well, we'll look in a minute at what needs clarification.

Then, right foot forward, come back and lower your head. Left foot forward, go forward, arms open.

Just stay there and breathe, and you're radiating your unconditional care towards whatever they're working with in their life. May they have peace, find their way. And it's not personal. It's coming through you.

And then one more time, switch over.

People with the right foot forward, you're standing in your life, maybe some difficult situation, and this oceanic being is receiving from you anything that you can let go of that is not helpful for you.

That's the part of yourself that is always there, offering support. So often forget that that's there.

If you want to think of it as another being, that's fine. It's larger than your historical self.

And back. Stand on both feet. Just close your eyes for a moment.

Switching sides

People facing the windows, bring your right foot forward. People facing the other wall, the left foot forward.

Start with your hands on your chest, and we'll start with the people facing the windows. The right foot forward people are back, which means your head is down, your hands are on your chest. The left foot forward people, you're forward in your weight and your arms are open. You're radiating.

You are unconditionally wishing them well. May their challenges be fruitful challenges.

Then the first move here will be: the people facing the windows are going to inhale coming forward. The other people will inhale going back.

When you're the ocean, your head stays up. Your left foot is forward. You're gazing at the horizon, not looking down.

Left foot forward, your head is up.

Yeah, the other way. The left foot forward — I'll clarify that in a moment.

And reverse.

The ocean never bows their head. The individual being bows their head.

The other way.

Just see if you can let the energetic movement work with you. Less about the details of it. Let your body open to the movement.

If your right foot's forward, when you go back, you lower your head. Back. Exhaling.

Left foot forward is exhaling, going forward, radiating. When your right foot is forward and you're back, your head is down.

Left foot is forward. Ready.

Feel through your whole torso.

A version of, in helping us feel the influence — any parts of the gesture that feel more familiar, or easier to embody. Any ones that feel further away.

You'll be influenced throughout your whole body, your inner life.

A familiar difficulty

Just for a moment, imagine a situation in your home life that is sometimes challenging. It doesn't have to be a big thing. It can be, you know, maybe you're sitting on the sofa and you sometimes get into a difficult inner state, or a difficult conversation. Or it could be something at work, but just something that is somewhat familiar. Let it be in a specific location. It's not like you're always that way, but a niggly kind of state can come to you in that place.

And just as you're standing here, shift your weight a little forward and back. You can have a foot forward if you like, or not. You're not standing stock still. You've got some movement, and a feeling of — could you imagine that being, that future?

That future conditioned self. That future historical self. Can you imagine that future historical self receiving the radiance, the memory, the knowing that it is only one part of a vast being?

Just see if that — whether you want to see that as this image of radiant light, ocean of goodwill. You see what feels right to you.

Move in whatever ways feel right for you to embody this picture. Now look forward. You can do the arm gesture. You can just stand more or less still.

Feel what would help you to connect, so that your inner life can remember a way of being with a challenging moment.

A sense of with you, remembering. I know it's hard. You're not alone.

Your body helps you. Something.

[Silence 39 seconds]

Free to move in any way, or be still, or use your hands on your body — anything that functions as, say, an anchoring.

Village. Grace.

If possible, I highly recommend: it's not a trying to get rid of that difficulty. It's a being with it, with this larger place, and letting it unfold in the presence of this larger place.

To be big enough.

Let that go for a moment. And feel yourself. You're here in this room, on this spot. Shift your weight so you have a good sense: I'm here. You hear the sounds that are around you.

Feel what you are in the room. Sense of the space here.

Just bow to your partner. Thanks.

And one can just take a few minutes, if you like. Just kind of — what was challenging? What was an easy part of that? What felt most familiar, least familiar, in any of that?

Not only that last part, but in any of that — in the experimenting with those gestures and gazing at another.

Was it possible to include the other and have yourself? And maybe not at all, and that's okay.

So just see what seemed important for you. You can sit. You can take a few minutes of work.